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ABSTRACT

This report is a brief account of the author's 1968-69 postdoctoral fellowship activities at Harvard, studying the bearing of social science literature and methodology on the history of education, particularly with reference to historical patterns of socialization. Specific products to which reference is made include two papers: "Childhood in America: The Image and the Experience," and "The Family Versus the World: The Experience of Bronson Alcott." An exploratory article on the history of American attitudes toward children (CG 005 600) is to be published in the "Encyclopedia of Education;" this same topic is the basis for a book in progress. (DJB)

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FINAL REPORT OF CHARLES E. STRICKLAND

I spent 1968-1969 at the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History, Harvard University, studying the bearing of social science literature and methodology on the history of education, particularly with reference to historical patterns of socialization. I was particularly fortunate to have close contact not only with such social historians as Oscar Handlin and Bernard Bailyn but also with several others who were engaged in a project, funded by the U. S. Children's Bureau, dealing with the historical aspects of childhood in America. These included Professors Robert Bremner, John Barnard, Robert Mennel and Temara Harevan. I also had the opportunity to work with John Demos, of Brandeis University, who is exploring aspects of the family and child-rearing in the colonial period. In addition, I participated in a seminar conducted by Erik Erikson on "History and Life History." During the course of my study, I became particularly interested in the uses of social role theory in analyzing historical relationships between children and adults. A fruitful (and totally unexpected) experience occurred in April of 1969, when for a period of several weeks I left the library and seminar to witness the "Harvard Confrontation," which provided an opportunity to understand at least one aspect of conflict between the young and their elders.

Specific outcomes include two papers delivered before educators and historians, the first entitled "Childhood in America: the Image and the Experience," given in March, 1970, before the American Educational Research Association, and "The Family versus the world: the Experience of Bronson Alcott," given at the Organization of American Historians in April, 1970. In addition, I organized and chaired a symposium on "American Attitudes toward Children" for the 1970 meeting of the A.E.R.A. Finally, I have written an exploratory article on the history of American attitudes toward children, to be published in the Encylopedia of Education, and this same topic provides the basis for a book in progress.

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